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MEMORANDUM FOR: Directors, NWS Headquarters Offices  
Directors, NWS Regions  
Directors, NWS Staff Offices

FROM: Irwin T. David, Chief Financial Officer  
Chief Administrative Officer

SUBJECT: NWS Gainsharing Travel Savings Program

### **1. Introduction**

This memorandum describes the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration/National Weather Service (NWS) procedures for implementing the NWS Travel Gainsharing Savings Program. The procedures are organized as follows: 1) introduction, 2) objective, 3) authority, 4) policies, 5) summary of responsibilities, 6) glossary, and 7) exhibits and sample forms.

### **2. Objective**

The Gainsharing Travel Savings Program (GTSP) rewards employees who save the agency money while on official travel. These savings will result from the use of less expensive lodging and/or from use of frequent flyer benefits for the purchase of airline tickets or lodging for official travel.

### **3. Authority**

The Government Employees Incentive Awards Act, 5 U.S.C., paragraph 4501-4507, authorized an agency to pay a cash award for "efficiency" or "economy".

The NWS GTSP is described in Article 23, section 5 of the NWS-National Weather Service Employees Organization Collective Bargaining Agreement signed October 25, 2001. NWS employee participation in this program is optional. All employees and managers can participate with the exception of Senior Executive Service or equivalent members.

### **4. Policies**

The amount of the award for the employee will be 50 percent of the savings on lodging expenses and/or the contract carrier airfare. Taxes will be withheld (Federal, State, local, FICA) on the award amount.

In most cases, the cumulative savings to the Agency must be at least \$200 before the employee is eligible to receive an award. However, awards may be processed prior to reaching the minimum dollar limit when:

1. The employee will transfer or be reassigned to another office; or
2. The employee is an infrequent traveler; or
3. It is the end of the fiscal year.

**Lodging savings can occur:**

- When employees stay with relatives or friends while on official travel and avoid lodging expenses. These employees will receive one-half of the lodging rate for the locality toward the travel savings award.
- When savings result from shared accommodations at prepaid, contractual or lodging paid for by employees with per diem.
- When savings result from staying at a hotel with rates less than the government USA contract rates for the per diem.

**Lodging savings will not occur:**

- When an employee is on travel where lodging was prepaid or prearranged through contractual arrangements with the hotel (except if savings result from shared accommodations).
- For lodging savings at hotels identified under the GSA Premier Lodging Program, unless accommodations are shared with another employee on travel.
- For lodging costs incurred on personal time such as annual leave during official travel or any other type of personal preference travel used in conjunction with official travel.
- When lodging for extended TDY has been contracted by the employee's organization through a lease or purchase order.

Employees may not incur additional expenses in transportation or other miscellaneous costs in effort to reduce lodging expenses. Employees who incur additional transportation expenses must have those expenses deducted from their lodging savings. Examples of excess transportation costs include, but are not limited to, renting a vehicle (when one would not normally be rented) at a Temporary Duty (TDY) site to travel to a place of free or reduced lodging; when driving a privately owned vehicle (POV) driving more miles than would normally be traveled to/from the TDY site to obtain free or reduced lodging; or where a taxi fare is incurred which would not normally have been incurred to obtain free or reduced lodging. Additional duty time for travel is considered an additional expense. The approving official must determine if "other" transportation expenses incurred were excessive.

All employees must utilize hotels/motels that meet the requirements of the Hotel and Motel Fire Safety Act of 1990. The list may be accessed through the Internet at <http://www.usfa.fema.gov/hotel/index/htm>.

All TDY travel with lodging expenses, foreign and domestic, will be covered under this program. PCS travel is excluded from the gainsharing program.

The first 30 days of extended TDY travel (e.g., a detail of more than 30 days where a reduced per diem amount is required) qualify for gainsharing, except when lodging has been contracted by an employee's organization through a lease or purchase order.

### **Frequent Flyer Benefit Program**

Employees who obtain a free coach class ticket with frequent flyer benefits earned on official Government travel or personal travel are eligible for the travel savings program. Savings will be measured against the contract rate in effect at the time of the flight. If there is no contract rate, then the lowest available non-restricted coach fare will be used as the basis for measurement of the savings as supported by documentation from a SATO itinerary.

Employees can use frequent flyer benefits to obtain lodging savings.

## **5. Summary of Responsibilities**

### **Employee**

A. Comply with all federal, departmental and NOAA travel regulations. In most cases, the cumulative savings to the Agency must be at least \$200 before the employee is eligible to receive an award. However, awards may be processed prior to reaching the minimum dollar limit when: a) the employee will transfer or be reassigned to another office; b) the employee is an infrequent traveler; or c) it is the end of the fiscal year.

B. Complete the Travel Savings Form (**Exhibit 1**). The employee will sign and date the Travel Savings Form and submit it to the Travel Approving Official for signature. **Exhibit 2 contains Instructions for Completing Travel Savings Form. An example and sample Travel Savings Form is at Exhibit 3.**

C. Prepare the CD-326 Form for travel savings award. Use the following code in block 4: fiscal year, fund code 23, project code: A8M1JGS or A8M1HGS, organization code. Obtain the supervisor's signature on the CD-326 and forward it (**Exhibit 4 contains a completed sample**) along with the travel order and voucher to the Travel Approving official for signature.

## **Travel Approving Official**

A. After reviewing documentation, sign and date the Travel Savings and the CD-326 Forms. Note: in some cases the immediate supervisor and approving official are the same.

B. Forward the CD-326 with the attached Travel Savings Form to the servicing Human Resource Office, for processing.

C. Forward a copy of the CD-326 and Travel Savings Forms to the FMC Budget Office for record keeping.

## **Human Resource Office**

The Human Resource Office will process the CD-326 and transmit it to the National Finance Center for payment.

## **FMC Budget Office**

The FMCs should perform a quarterly search of the gainsharing awards under project code: A8M1JGS for all NWS units except NCEP (NCEP uses project code A8M1HGS) and process a Budget Operation Plan adjustment to transfer the expense to the awards account from the travel account for the amount of the gainsharing awards. The FMC budget office will receive a copy of the CD-326 and maintain records of the number and amount of gainsharing awards for transmission to W/CF02 quarterly (negative reports are required).

## **6. Glossary**

Frequent Flyer Benefits. Mileage points accumulated using the airlines frequent flyer mileage programs which results in free airline tickets.

GSA Premier Lodging Program. Hotels that have agreed to provide lodging at lower than the per diem rate.

GTSP Gainsharing Travel Savings Program

Travel Approving Official. A NWS employee delegated to approve travel, who serves as an award recommending individual.

## **7. Exhibits and Sample Forms**

Exhibit 1 - NWS Gainsharing Travel Savings Form (WS-H33 Form)

Exhibit 2 - Instructions for completing NWS GTSF

Exhibit 3 - Sample GTSF (WS-H33 Form)

Exhibit 4 - Sample CD 326 completed for Gainsharing Award

## **Note:**

The gainsharing travel savings program is in the process of being incorporated into the NWS directive program.

NWS Gainsharing Travel Savings Form

**Exhibit 1**

Employee name: \_\_\_\_\_ Travel Authorization # \_\_\_\_\_  
Employee SSN: \_\_\_\_\_ Hotel/Motel #: \_\_\_\_\_

SAVINGS COMPUTATION	1 <sup>ST</sup> NIGHT	2 <sup>nd</sup> Night	3 <sup>rd</sup> NIGHT	4 <sup>th</sup> NIGHT	5 <sup>th</sup> NIGHT	6 <sup>th</sup> NIGHT	7 <sup>th</sup> NIGHT
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Day and Date

1. Maximum Lodging Rate
2. Minus Actual Cost
3. Minus Excessive Transp
4. Lodging Savings for NWS

5. Contract Carrier Cost
6. Actual Ticket Cost
7. Airfare Savings

8. Total Savings for NWS

SAVINGS COMPUTATION	8th NIGHT	9th Night	10th NIGHT	11th NIGHT	12th NIGHT	13th NIGHT	14th NIGHT
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Day and Date

1. Maximum Lodging Rate
2. Minus Actual Cost
3. Minus Excessive Transp
4. Lodging Savings for NWS

5. Contract Carrier Cost
6. Actual Ticket Cost
7. Airfare Savings

8. Total Savings for NWS

SUMMARY DATA

9. Total Lodging Savings
10. Total Airfare Savings
11. Total Savings for NWS

Employee Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Approving Official

12. Award Amount to Employee

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions for Completing NWS Gainsharing Travel Savings Form**

The NWS Gainsharing Travel Savings Form (WS-H33 Form) will be completed when lodging savings or redemption of frequent flyer benefits are realized and submitted with the travel voucher to the approving official for signature. Both the employee and approving official must sign and date the form and send it to the servicing Human Resources Division.

Enter your name and social security number at the top of each form.

Enter the authorization number for each trip reported on the form.

Enter the property number for the hotel/motel identified on the Hotel and Motel Fire Safety Act of 1990 National Master List. The list may be accessed through the Internet at <http://www.usfa.fema.gov/hotel/index/htm>.

When a room is shared while on official travel, there may be a lodging savings. The employees should arrange to be billed separately. If this is not possible, a daily rate must be determined for each employee. Divide the total lodging costs by the number of employees and the number of nights to arrive at a daily rate for each employee. Subtract the daily rate incurred for each employee from the daily maximum lodging rate of the locality to obtain the amount of daily savings.

Enter the day of the week and date of the week for each night of lodging a savings was realized.

See Exhibit 3 for an example of a situation where an employee stayed with friends/relatives and used frequent flyer miles to purchase a ticket.

- Line 1: Enter the maximum lodging rate for the TDY locality for each night's lodging.
- Line 2: Enter the actual lodging cost for each night's lodging. In the example, the lodging amount is 0 because the employee stayed with a friend or relative.
- Line 3: Enter excessive transportation costs incurred when the lodging is more distant from the TDY site. A determination must be made by the approving official that the transportation expenses incurred were excessive. In the example, \$6.00 was determined to be excessive for each day and was deducted from the savings.
- Line 4: Actual lodging expenses and any excessive transportation expenses are deducted from the maximum lodging rate for each night to arrive at the net lodging savings for NWS.

- Line 5: If frequent flyer benefits are being realized, enter the cost of the contract carrier or lowest coach fare available for the airline cost.
- Line 6: Enter frequent flyer benefits redeemed. In the first example, the traveler received a free ticket.
- Line 7: The airfare savings are calculated.
- Line 8: The total savings for NWS is calculated.

Summary Data:

- Line 9: Total lodging savings are recorded.
- Line 10: The dollar amount of frequent flyer benefits saved is recorded.
- Line 11: Total savings for NWS are recorded.
- Line 12: The amount to be awarded to the employee is recorded.

**NWS Gainsharing Travel Savings Form**  
**(Staying with Family & Friends)**

**Exhibit 3**  
**SAMPLE**

Employee name: David G. Traveler Travel Authorization # 2ZZZS000

Employee SSN: 999-99-9999 Hotel/Motel: Stayed with Family

SAVINGS COMPUTATION	1 <sup>ST</sup> NIGHT	2 <sup>nd</sup> Night	3 <sup>rd</sup> NIGHT	4 <sup>th</sup> NIGHT	5 <sup>th</sup> NIGHT	6 <sup>th</sup> NIGHT	7 <sup>th</sup> NIGHT
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Day and Date

1. Maximum Lodging Rate	155.00	155.00	155.00	155.00	155.00		
2. Minus Actual Cost	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		
3. Minus Excessive Transp	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00		
4. Lodging Savings for NWS	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00		

5. Contract Carrier Cost	353.00						
6. Actual Ticket Cost	0.00						
7. Airfare Savings	353.00						

8. Total Savings for NWS	502.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	\$149.00		
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SAVINGS COMPUTATION	8th NIGHT	9th Night	10th NIGHT	11th NIGHT	12th NIGHT	13th NIGHT	14th NIGHT
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Day and Date

1. Maximum Lodging Rate							
2. Minus Actual Cost							
3. Minus Excessive Transp							
4. Lodging Savings for NWS							

5. Contract Carrier Cost							
6. Actual Ticket Cost							
7. Airfare Savings							

8. Total Savings for NWS							
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**SUMMARY DATA**

9. Total Lodging Savings	\$745.00	Employee Signature _____	Date _____
10. Total Airfare Savings	\$353.00		
11. Total Savings for NWS	\$1,098.00	Approving Official _____	
12. Award Amount to Employee	\$ 549.00	Signature _____	Date _____